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**OFFICE OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

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**Linda McCulloch**  
Superintendent

April 12, 2004

Secretary Rod Paige  
United States Department of Education  
400 Maryland Ave., S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20202-6100

Dear Secretary Paige:

This letter and attachments reiterate the Montana Consolidated State Application submitted September 1, 2003, to the U.S. Department of Education describing Montana's definition of highly qualified teachers and the Montana HOUSSE (high objective uniform state standard of evaluation). In addition, pursuant to the advice given to my office in November by the U.S. Department of Education's Teacher Assistance Corps, this correspondence clarifies the Montana Office of Public Instruction's holistic approach to preparing and supporting high quality educators to ensure that all students achieve.

The state of Montana has long been committed to meeting the learning needs of all its students, and to that end Montana has worked diligently for the past 32 years building a seamless system of K-16 education. We welcome the U.S. Department of Education's support in helping Montana reach our goal "... to establish a system of education which will develop the full educational potential of each person. Equality of education opportunity is guaranteed to each person of the state." (The Constitution of the State of Montana, Article X, 1972)

The announcement from your office on March 15, 2004, establishing flexibility in the area of highly qualified teachers for rural states and regions, was welcome news to Montanans, further validating the Montana definition of highly qualified teachers.

We look forward to our ongoing work with the U.S. Department of Education to ensure that all Montana students develop full educational potential.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda McCulloch".

Linda McCulloch  
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Attachments

## **Montana Teacher Certification System**

The Montana system of teacher certification is a comprehensive, holistic system that includes three major components: teacher preparation, teacher licensure, and ongoing, required professional development. These three components are integral to one another, and provide assurance to Montana citizens that teachers, specialists, and administrators within Montana schools are qualified to meet the learning needs of all Montana students.

### **Teacher Preparation**

The Montana Board of Public Education (BPE) is authorized under state law and administrative rule to create and establish a system of teacher certification including teacher training and preparation. Based on the Professional Educator Preparation Program Standards (PEPPS), the Board of Public Education accredits teacher education units in Montana's higher education institutions. Six teacher education units are accredited following the protocol of the Joint National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the State of Montana review process; three teacher education units are currently accredited following the protocol of Montana's Full State review process. These protocols are defined in the Professional Educator Preparation Program Standards and Procedural Manual found on the OPI Web site at [www.opi.state.mt.us](http://www.opi.state.mt.us).

The Board of Public Education reviews and approves the Montana Professional Educator Preparation Program Standards on a five-year cycle. The current PEPPS are in effect from January 2001 through December 2005. The Montana standards are aligned to the Standards for Approval of Teacher Education developed by the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC), the standards of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), the standards of the Interstate New Teachers Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) and standards from several other states, modified and amended to accommodate the needs of Montana.

The PEPPS guide the professional educator preparation programs in the development of curriculum, instructional strategies, aligned assessments, and supervised, relevant classroom experiences to prepare teacher candidates to meet the learning needs of all Montana students.

### **Teacher Licensure**

The Montana Board of Public Education (BPE) is charged to establish a uniform system of quality education and to ensure the maintenance of professional standards; this system of teacher and specialist certification (licensure) is established and maintained under the provisions of School Laws of Montana Section 20-4-101. The Montana BPE and the Superintendent of Public Instruction ensure that all educators teaching in the public schools of the state are fully licensed and endorsed in the area in which they teach.

Pursuant to School Laws of Montana 20-4-102, Board of Public Education Policies, to affect an orderly and uniform system of teacher and specialist certification, the BPE shall, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and in accordance with the provisions of this Section 20-4-102, prescribe and adopt policies for the issuance of teacher or

specialist licenses. As stated above, such policies shall provide for reasonable training and experience requirements for teacher, specialist, supervisor, and administrative licenses and endorsements as provided by the certification classification in 20-4-106, preparation requirements in 20-4-102, and Administrative Rules of Montana Teacher Certification (Chapter 57) and Montana Professional Educator Preparation Program Standards (Chapter 58).

To qualify for an initial teacher license the teacher candidate must verify that he/she has a bachelor's degree and has successfully completed a professional educator preparation program accredited by NCATE and/or a state board of education. Applicants for initial licensure who have a current professional, not provisional or alternative, teacher license from another state in a subject area that can be licensed in Montana is eligible for a Montana teaching license. An applicant, who has completed an accredited professional educator preparation program, must provide to the Superintendent the results of a completed background check including fingerprints before an initial Montana license is issued.

The Montana Board of Public Education adopted as Administrative Rules of Montana the Teaching Endorsement Internship Program, 10.55.707. The intent of the rule is to assist school districts with the crisis of teacher shortages and recruitment and retention issues. The district identifies a licensed teacher within the district and assigns the teacher to a content area for which that teacher is not endorsed. Once enrolled, the cooperating school district requests that the teaching intern be considered appropriately assigned while actively engaged in the program. The teaching endorsement internship program must be completed in three years from the initial date of enrollment. The intern completes an individually generated course of study approved by the college or university, is supervised on-site by the administrator and additionally is supervised periodically by the college/university faculty or their designee. The teaching endorsement internship program serves the district, intern, and students' learning needs.

### **Ongoing Professional Development**

According to Montana law and administrative rule, Montana teachers are required to participate in preapproved professional development activities each year. Pursuant to Administrative Rules of Montana 10.65.102, Policy Governing Pupil-Instruction Related Days and School Laws of Montana 20-1-304, seven pupil instruction-related days are approved for base funding program calculations to support school district pupil-instruction related days. A pupil instruction day is a day of teacher activities devoted to improving the quality of instruction. In addition, Administrative Rules of Montana, 10.55.714 Professional Development, defines professional development and outlines the requirements for district professional development policy.

In addition to participating in the required PIR days' professional development activities, licensed teachers, in five-year increments, must earn 60 renewal units that are planned and structured; of benefit to the license holder's professional development; an exposure to scientifically based research strategies and methods; or relevant higher education courses. Approved providers of professional development activities offering acceptable renewal unit activities for license renewal are: state agencies, regional or national accredited college and university programs, accredited school districts; professional organizations and government agencies; and independent contractors. With the exception of awarding academic credits by

colleges or universities, the superintendent of public instruction approves all providers for professional development activities.

Montana is proud of the eight teacher education units within the state. We are convinced that the teachers who have graduated and are subsequently recommended to the Superintendent of Public Instruction for licensure are ready for the classroom. Therefore, and in accordance with Montana law and administrative rule, Montana teachers meet the definition of a highly qualified teacher if they are licensed and endorsed in the areas in which they teach.

### ***Resource Web sites***

Superintendent of Public Instruction – [www.opi.state.mt.us](http://www.opi.state.mt.us)

Montana Board of Public Instruction – [www.bpe.state.mt.us](http://www.bpe.state.mt.us)

Certification Standards and Practices Advisory Council – [www.bpe.state.mt.us/advice.htm](http://www.bpe.state.mt.us/advice.htm)

School Laws of Montana – [www.opi.state.mt.us](http://www.opi.state.mt.us)

### ***Contact Information***

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## Montana Teacher Candidate Assessment Matrix

### Montana Professional Educator Preparation Program Standards

Pursuant to Montana law and administrative rule, the Montana Board of Public Education prescribes and adopts policies for the issuance of teacher or specialist certificates. Such policies require teacher education units to provide reasonable training and experience for teacher, specialist, supervisor, and administrative certificates and endorsements as described in Administrative Rules of Montana Chapter 57 Teacher Certification and Chapter 58 Professional Educator Preparation Program Standards. The Montana Board of Public Education establishes this uniform system of quality education to ensure the maintenance of professional standards. Under the provisions of School Laws of Montana 20-4-101, no person shall be permitted to teach in the public schools of the state until he/she has obtained a teacher license or specialist license.

Montana's Educator Preparation Programs provide a rigorous academic and pedagogical education program for prospective teachers. The matrix below outlines the assessment decision points used by Montana's Educator Preparation Programs to assess teacher candidates' readiness to teach in Montana's and the nation's public schools. The three assessment decision points include: admission to teacher education, prior to student teaching, and prior to completion of the program. In addition, the matrix describes the process used to assess and verify content knowledge of each teacher candidate.

<b>Admission to Teacher Education</b>	<b>Prior to Student Teaching</b>	<b>Prior to Program Completion</b>	<b>Content Knowledge Verification</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gained admission to the University or College</li> <li>• Completed required semester university /college credits</li> <li>• A minimum cumulative GPA (including all transfer credits) of at least a 2.50 and</li> <li>• Evidence of their writing ability by means of a written essay or</li> </ul>	<p>The prospective student teacher applies for student teaching and must have met the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full Admission into the Teacher Education Program (have met the above criteria)</li> <li>• GPA of at least 2.50 overall, in major, and in minor</li> <li>• Minimum semester credits earned with Grade of C- or better in all required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In addition to the requirements listed above students must successfully complete student teaching with a grade of C or better and successfully complete capstone course/ portfolio/ or student teaching seminar.</li> <li>• Comprehensive Performance Based</li> <li>• Assessment using criteria aligned with the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium</li> </ul>	<p>Content knowledge is assessed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GPA checks – the cumulative GPA prior to admission is almost entirely content knowledge course work.</li> <li>• Minimum grades of C in required content course work (Taken in the College of Arts and Sciences) that includes University/College Core and content courses</li> </ul>

Admission to Teacher Education	Prior to Student Teaching	Prior to Program Completion	Content Knowledge Verification
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-Professional Skills Test (PPST) minimum scores of 170 in reading, 170 in writing, and 170 in mathematics</li> <li>• Appropriate experience with youth</li> <li>• Supportive recommendations from at least two education faculty members</li> <li>• Completion of an introductory psychology course and an English composition course with a minimum grade of C or better in each</li> <li>• Criminal background check</li> </ul>	<p>course work including: All Teacher Education Unit classes, Native American Studies course, Arts methods courses (elementary only), subject matter methods course (s) (for secondary education students)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful completion of field experiences with evaluations rated proficient.</li> <li>• Comprehensive review of student record is conducted. Approval to student teach is based on this review process of faculty input from Teacher Education Unit and the student's discipline major assessing student preparedness to student teach.</li> <li>• Pass University/College Writing Proficiency Test or</li> <li>• Provide prepared writing samples</li> </ul>	<p>standards (INTASC) provides evidence teacher candidates' content knowledge, pedagogical skills, and dispositions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rating by cooperating teachers and faculty supervisors in the field experiences and student teaching on the criterion: <i>Demonstrates knowledge of the disciplines and subject matter related to the curriculum.</i></li> <li>• Demonstration of content knowledge in the portfolio criterion: <i>Best Piece of Academic Work and Reflective Essay.</i> This item is rated on a scale of unsatisfactory, proficient, or distinguished or competency not demonstrated, emergent, developing, or competent.</li> </ul> <p>Specific content area knowledge is required for 5-12 licensure and endorsements. According to Administrative Rules of Montana, 10.57.412 Class 1 and 2 Teaching Endorsements, to obtain a secondary endorsement the applicant must provide verification of at least: (1)</p>

Admission to Teacher Education	Prior to Student Teaching	Prior to Program Completion	Content Knowledge Verification
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate experience with youth</li> <li>• Supportive recommendations from at least two education faculty members</li> <li>• Completion of an introductory psychology course and an English composition course with a minimum grade of C or better in each</li> </ul>		16 semester credits in a professional educator preparation program, including student teaching or an appropriate college waiver; and (2) 30 semester credits in an approved major and 20 semester credits in an approved minor; or (3) 40 semester credits in an approved extended major.

### Contact Information:

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**Montana's Definition of Highly Qualified Teachers  
Elementary, Middle Grades, and Secondary  
High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation (HOUSSE)**

**Highly Qualified Teacher - Elementary**

Highly Qualified Definition for Elementary Teachers Not New to the Profession

Teachers currently teaching in Montana public schools who are licensed and endorsed in the areas they teach are highly qualified and meet the requirements of President Bush's No Child Left Behind Act.

Source: School Laws of Montana and Administrative Rules of Montana

[www.opi.state.mt.us](http://www.opi.state.mt.us)

Policies of the Montana Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Board of Public Education require teachers not new to the profession to demonstrate competence and are considered highly qualified by meeting a high objective uniform state standard of evaluation that:

**I. Is set by the State for both grade appropriate academic subject matter knowledge and teaching skills;**

- Separate licenses are issued that are specific to age/grade level and academic content knowledge
  1. Standard Elementary K-8
  2. Standard Secondary 5-12
  3. Professional Elementary K-8
  4. Professional Secondary 5-12
- Content knowledge standards are based on student age/grade level
  1. General core knowledge, including elementary curriculum, is required for K-8 teachers; and
  2. Specific content area knowledge is required for 5-12 licensure and endorsements. Pursuant to Administrative Rules of Montana, 10.57.412 Class 1 and 2 Teaching Endorsements, to obtain a secondary endorsement the applicant must provide verification of at least: (1) 16 semester credits in a professional educator preparation program, including student teaching or an appropriate college waiver; and (2) 30 semester credits in an approved major and 20 semester credits in an approved minor; or (3) 40 semester credits in an approved extended major.
- Pedagogical skills are taught at the specific age/grade level and focus on meeting the diverse learning needs of all students
  1. Required content for K-8 licenses includes: Elementary methods, formal and informal assessment strategies, and understanding how students differ in development and approaches to learning;
  2. Required content for 5-12 licenses includes: Secondary content methods, formal and informal assessment strategies, and understanding how students differ in development and approaches to learning;
  3. Reading, writing, and mathematics content is required for elementary licenses;
  4. All teachers are required to successfully complete the general program of study including composition, mathematics, science, social studies, etc. prior to acceptance into the teacher education unit.



**II. Is aligned with challenging State academic content and student academic achievement standards and developed in consultation with core content specialists, teachers, principals, and school administrators;**

- The Montana Board of Public Education established a process by which Montana education stakeholders developed the Montana K-12 content and performance standards. The Montana K-12 Standards Framework describes what all public school students will know and be able to do upon graduation from the Montana education system. The Board adopted the standards into Administrative Rules of Montana, Chapter 54, Content and Performance Standards. These K-12 content and performance standards are aligned to the educator preparation program standards.
- Professional educator preparation program standards are maintained and reviewed on a regular cycle by the Certification Standards and Practices Advisory Board in coordination with the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Montana education community.
- According to School Laws of Montana 20-4-102, Board of Public Education Policies, the BPE shall, to affect an orderly and uniform system of teacher and specialist certification, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and in accordance with the provisions of this Section 20-4-102, prescribe and adopt policies for the issuance of teacher or specialist licenses. These policies shall provide for reasonable training and experience requirements for teacher, specialist, supervisor, and administrative licenses and endorsements as provided by the certification classification in 20-4-106, preparation requirements in 20-4-102, and Administrative Rules of Montana Teacher Certification (Chapter 57) and Montana Professional Educator Preparation Program Standards (Chapter 58).

Source: [www.opi.state.mt.us](http://www.opi.state.mt.us)

**III. Provides objective, coherent information about the teacher's attainment of core content knowledge in the academic subjects in which a teacher teaches;**

- Each educator preparation unit reviews teacher candidates' core content knowledge (see attached Montana Teacher Candidate Assessment Matrix);
- The Montana Professional Educator Program Standards are the basis for attaining a teaching license and the basis for determining an individual's level of content knowledge in a specific academic content area;
- Pursuant to Administrative Rules of Montana, 10.57.412 Class 1 and 2 Teaching Endorsements, to obtain a secondary endorsement the applicant must provide verification of at least: (1) 16 semester credits in a professional educator preparation program, including student teaching or an appropriate college waiver; and (2) 30 semester credits in an approved major and 20 semester credits in an approved minor; or (3) 40 semester credits in an approved extended major; and
- Supervision and evaluation of field experiences and student teaching are used to verify teachers' attainment of core content knowledge.

**IV. Is applied uniformly to all teachers in the same academic subject and the same grade level throughout the State;**

- All teachers must have successfully completed a professional educator preparation program accredited by NCATE and/or a state board of education;

- Pursuant to School Laws of Montana 20-4-102, Board of Public Education Policies, to affect an orderly and uniform system of teacher and specialist certification, the BPE shall, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and in accordance with the provisions of this Section 20-4-102, prescribe and adopt policies for the issuance of teacher or specialist licenses. Under the provisions of School Laws of Montana 20-4-101, no person shall be permitted to teach in the public schools of the state until he/she has obtained a teacher license or specialist license; and
- All teachers applying for initial license must be recommended by a professional educator preparation program accredited by NCATE and/or a state board of education.

**V. Takes into consideration, but not be based primarily on, the time the teacher has been teaching in the academic subject;**

- Montana licensure and endorsements are based on the Professional Educator Preparation Program Standards adopted by the Board, which include the requirement that all candidates provide verification of completion of an accredited educator preparation program to include student teaching or university supervised teaching experience; and
- Districts experiencing teacher shortages are able to enroll their licensed teachers in the Board of Public Education's Teaching Internship Endorsement Program (ARM 10.55.707). This program allows a licensed teacher to add an endorsement to their license while teaching in that specific subject area. The professional educator preparation program will supervise periodically. Pursuant to Administrative Rules of Montana, the regulations guiding the Internship program are available to the public and on the Office of Public Instruction Web site, [www.opi.state.mt.us](http://www.opi.state.mt.us).

**VI. Is made available to the public upon request; and**

- The Montana Educator Licensure Program is publicly accessed through the Montana Office of Public Instruction Web site, [www.opi.state.mt.us](http://www.opi.state.mt.us) or by contacting the Office of Public Instruction Educator Licensure staff for information regarding licensure requirements for the state of Montana; and
- School districts are required to report annually to the OPI personnel assignments, verifying currency of Montana licenses and appropriate endorsements.

**Source:** Annual Data Collection, October, [www.opi.state.mt.us](http://www.opi.state.mt.us)

**VII. May involve multiple, objective measures of teacher competency.**

- An individual must hold at least a bachelor's degree and must meet the applicable Montana requirements necessary to obtain a full Montana license;
- All teachers must meet the academic requirements as established by the PEPPS and implemented by a professional educator preparation program accredited by NCATE and/or a state board of education;
- All teachers must successfully complete 60 units of renewal activities every five years for renewal of licenses;
- All renewal units must be earned during the valid term of the license and can be earned in a combination of in-service professional learning activities and college credit; and
- All school districts are funded by the State to provide at least three days of Pupil Instruction Related Days for professional development.

**Source:** [www.opi.state.mt.us](http://www.opi.state.mt.us) Administrative Rules of Montana 10.57.201 General Provisions to Issue Licenses; 10.57.215 Renewal Requirements; 10.55.714 Professional Development

## Highly Qualified Teacher – Middle Grades

### Highly Qualified Definition for Middle Grades Teachers Not New to the Profession

Teachers currently teaching in Montana public schools who are licensed and endorsed in the areas they teach are highly qualified and meet the requirements of President Bush's No Child Left Behind Act.

**Source:** School Laws of Montana and Administrative Rules of Montana

[www.opi.state.mt.us](http://www.opi.state.mt.us)

Policies of the Montana Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Board of Public Education state that teachers not new to the profession demonstrate competence and are considered highly qualified by meeting a high objective uniform state standard of evaluation that:

#### **I. Is set by the State for both grade appropriate academic subject matter knowledge and teaching skills;**

- Separate licenses are issued that are specific to age/grade level and academic content knowledge
  1. Standard Elementary K-8
  2. Standard Secondary 5-12
  3. Professional Elementary K-8
  4. Professional Secondary 5-12
- Content knowledge standards are based on student age/grade level
  1. General core knowledge, including elementary curriculum, is required for K-8 teachers; and
  2. Specific content area knowledge is required for 5-12 licensure and endorsements. Pursuant to Administrative Rules of Montana, 10.57.412 Class 1 and 2 Teaching Endorsements, to obtain a secondary endorsement the applicant must provide verification of at least: (1) 16 semester credits in a professional educator preparation program, including student teaching or an appropriate college waiver; and (2) 30 semester credits in an approved major and 20 semester credits in an approved minor; or (3) 40 semester credits in an approved extended major.
- Pedagogical skills are taught at the specific age/grade level and focus on meeting the diverse learning needs of all students
  1. Elementary methods, teaching exceptional children, and understanding diverse cultures are required content for K-8 licenses;
  2. Developmental reading content is required for elementary licenses;
  3. Secondary content methods, teaching exceptional children, and understanding the learning needs of diverse cultures are required content for 5-12 licenses;
  4. Teaching reading in the content area is a required program of study for secondary licenses; and
  5. All teachers are required to successfully complete the general program of study including mathematics prior to acceptance into the teacher education unit.

**II. Is aligned with challenging State academic content and student academic achievement standards and developed in consultation with core content specialists, teachers, principals, and school administrators;**

- The Montana Board of Public Education established a process by which Montana education stakeholders developed the Montana K-12 content and performance standards. The Montana K-12 Standards Framework describes what all students in public schools will know and be able to do upon graduation from the Montana education system. The Board adopted the standards into Administrative Rules of Montana, Chapter 54, Content and Performance Standards. These K-12 student performance standards are aligned to the educator preparation program standards.
- Professional educator preparation program standards are maintained and reviewed on a regular cycle by the Certification Standards and Practices Advisory Board in coordination with the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Montana education community.
- According to School Laws of Montana 20-4-102, Board of Public Education Policies, the BPE shall, to affect an orderly and uniform system of teacher and specialist certification, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and in accordance with the provisions of this Section 20-4-102, prescribe and adopt policies for the issuance of teacher or specialist licenses. These policies shall provide for reasonable training and experience requirements for teacher, specialist, supervisor, and administrative licenses and endorsements as provided by the certification classification in 20-4-106, preparation requirements in 20-4-102, and Administrative Rules of Montana Teacher Certification (Chapter 57) and Montana Professional Educator Preparation Program Standards (Chapter 58).

Source: [www.state.mt.us](http://www.state.mt.us)

**III. Provides objective, coherent information about the teacher's attainment of core content knowledge in the academic subjects in which a teacher teaches;**

- Each educator preparation unit reviews teacher candidates' core content knowledge (see attached Montana Teacher Candidate Assessment Matrix);
- The Montana Professional Educator Program Standards are the basis for attaining a teaching license and the basis for determining an individual's level of content knowledge in a specific academic content area;
- Pursuant to Administrative Rules of Montana, 10.57.412 Class 1 and 2 Teaching Endorsements, to obtain a secondary endorsement the applicant must provide verification of at least: (1) 16 semester credits in a professional educator preparation program, including student teaching or an appropriate college waiver; and (2) 30 semester credits in an approved major and 20 semester credits in an approved minor; or (3) 40 semester credits in an approved extended major; and
- Supervision and evaluation of field experiences and student teaching are used to verify teachers' attainment of core content knowledge.

**IV. Is applied uniformly to all teachers in the same academic subject and the same grade level throughout the State;**

- All teachers must have successfully completed a professional educator preparation program accredited by NCATE and/or a state board of education;

- Pursuant to School Laws of Montana 20-4-102, Board of Public Education Policies, to affect an orderly and uniform system of teacher and specialist certification, the BPE shall, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and in accordance with the provisions of this Section 20-4-102, prescribe and adopt policies for the issuance of teacher or specialist licenses. Under the provisions of School Laws of Montana 20-4-101, no person shall be permitted to teach in the public schools of the state until he/she has obtained a teacher license or specialist license;
- All teachers applying for initial license must be recommended by a professional educator preparation program accredited by NCATE and/or a state board of education.

**V. Takes into consideration, but not be based primarily on, the time the teacher has been teaching in the academic subject;**

- Montana licensure and endorsements are based on the Professional Educator Preparation Program Standards adopted by the Board, which include the requirement that all candidates provide verification of completion of an accredited educator preparation program to include student teaching or university supervised teaching experience; and
- Districts experiencing teacher shortages are able to enroll their licensed teachers in the Board of Public Education's Teaching Internship Endorsement Program (ARM 10.55.707). This program allows a licensed teacher to add an endorsement to their license while teaching in that specific subject area. The professional educator preparation program will supervise periodically. Pursuant to Administrative Rules of Montana, the regulations guiding the Internship program are available to the public and on the Office of Public Instruction Web site, [www.opi.state.mt.us](http://www.opi.state.mt.us).

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**VII. May involve multiple, objective measures of teacher competency.**

- An individual must hold at least a bachelor's degree and must meet the applicable Montana requirements necessary to obtain a full Montana license;
- All teachers must meet the academic requirements as established by the PEPPS and implemented by a professional educator preparation program accredited by NCATE and/or a state board of education;
- All teachers must successfully complete 60 units of renewal activities every five years for renewal of licenses;
- All renewal units must be earned during the valid term of the license and can be earned in a combination of in-service professional learning activities and college credit; and
- All school districts are funded by the State to provide at least three days of Pupil Instruction Related days for professional development.

**Source:** Administrative Rules of Montana 10.57.201 General Provisions to Issue Licenses; 10.57.215 Renewal Requirements; 10.55.714 Professional Development

## Highly Qualified Teacher – Secondary

### Highly Qualified Definition for Secondary Teachers Not New to the Profession

Teachers currently teaching in Montana public schools who are licensed and endorsed in the areas they teach are highly qualified and meet the requirements of President Bush's No Child Left Behind Act.

**Source:** School Laws of Montana and Administrative Rules of Montana  
[www.opi.state.mt.us](http://www.opi.state.mt.us)

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- Pedagogical skills are taught at the specific age/grade level and focus on meeting the diverse learning needs of all students
  1. Required content for K-8 licenses includes: Elementary methods, formal and informal assessment strategies, and understanding how students differ in development and approaches to learning;
  2. Reading, writing, and mathematics content are required for elementary licenses;
  3. Required content for 5-12 licenses includes: Secondary content methods, formal and informal assessment strategies, and understanding how students differ in development and approaches to learning;
  4. All teachers are required to successfully complete the general program of study including composition, mathematics, science, social studies, etc. prior to acceptance into the teacher education unit.

#### **II. Is aligned with challenging State academic content and student academic achievement standards and developed in consultation with core content specialists, teachers, principals, and school administrators;**

- The Montana Board of Public Education established a process by which Montana education stakeholders developed the Montana K-12 content and performance standards. The Montana K-12 Standards Framework described what all public school students would know and be able to do upon graduation from the Montana education system. The Board adopted the standards into Administrative Rules of Montana, Chapter 54, Content and Performance Standards. These K-12 content and performance standards are aligned to the educator preparation program standards.



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Source: [www.opi.state.mt.us](http://www.opi.state.mt.us)

**III. Provides objective, coherent information about the teacher's attainment of core content knowledge in the academic subjects in which a teacher teaches;**

- Each teacher education unit reviews teacher candidates' core content knowledge (see attached Montana Teacher Candidate Assessment Matrix);
- The Montana Professional Educator Program Standards are the basis for attaining a teaching license and the basis for determining an individual's level of content knowledge in a specific academic content area;
- Pursuant to Administrative Rules of Montana, 10.57.412 Class 1 and 2 Teaching Endorsements, to obtain a secondary endorsement the applicant must provide verification of at least: (1) 16 semester credits in a professional educator preparation program, including student teaching or an appropriate college waiver; and (2) 30 semester credits in an approved major and 20 semester credits in an approved minor; or (3) 40 semester credits in an approved extended major; and
- Supervision and evaluation of field experiences and student teaching are used to verify teachers' attainment of core content knowledge.

**IV. Is applied uniformly to all teachers in the same academic subject and the same grade level throughout the State;**

- All teacher candidates must successfully complete a NCATE and/or state board of education accredited educator preparation program;
- Pursuant to School Laws of Montana 20-4-102, Board of Public Education Policies, to affect an orderly and uniform system of teacher and specialist certification, the BPE shall, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and in accordance with the provisions of this Section 20-4-102, prescribe and adopt policies for the issuance of teacher or specialist licenses. Under the provisions of School Laws of Montana 20-4-101, no person shall be permitted to teach in the public schools of the state until he/she has obtained a teacher license or specialist license; and
- All teachers applying for initial license must be recommended by a professional educator preparation program accredited by NCATE and/or a state board of education.

**V. Takes into consideration, but not be based primarily on, the time the teacher has been teaching in the academic subject;**

- Montana licensure and endorsements are based the Professional Educator Preparation Program Standards adopted by the Board, which include the requirement that all candidates provide verification of completion of an accredited educator preparation program to include student teaching or university supervised teaching experience; and
- Districts experiencing teacher shortages are able to enroll their licensed teachers in the Board of Public Education's Teaching Internship Endorsement Program (ARM 10.55.707). This program allows a licensed teacher to add an endorsement to their license while teaching in that specific subject area. The professional educator preparation program will supervise periodically. Pursuant to Administrative Rules of Montana, the regulations guiding the Internship program are available to the public and on the Office of Public Instruction Web site, [www.opi.state.mt.us](http://www.opi.state.mt.us)

**VI. Is made available to the public upon request; and**

- The Montana Educator Licensure Program is publicly accessed through the Montana Office of Public Instruction Web site, [www.opi.state.mt.us](http://www.opi.state.mt.us) or by contacting the Office of Public Instruction Educator Licensure staff for information regarding licensure requirements for the state of Montana; and
- School districts are required to report annually to the OPI personnel assignments, verifying currency of Montana licenses and appropriate endorsements.

**Source:** Annual Data Collection, October, [www.opi.state.mt.us](http://www.opi.state.mt.us)

**VII. May involve multiple, objective measures of teacher competency.**

- An individual must hold at least a bachelor's degree and must meet the applicable Montana requirements necessary to obtain a full Montana license;
- All teachers must meet the academic requirements as established by the PEPPS and implemented by a professional educator preparation program accredited by NCATE and/or a state board of education;
- All teachers must successfully complete 60 units of renewal activities every five years for renewal of licenses; and Required content for K-8 licenses includes: Elementary methods, formal and informal assessment strategies, and understanding how students differ in development and approaches to learning;
- All teachers are required to successfully complete the general program of study including composition, mathematics, science, social studies, etc. prior to acceptance into the teacher education unit; and
- All renewal units must be earned during the valid term of the license and can be earned in a combination of professional learning activities and college credit.

**Source:** [www.opi.state.mt.us](http://www.opi.state.mt.us) Administrative Rules of Montana 10.57.201 General Provisions to Issue Licenses; 10.57.215 Renewal Requirements; 10.55.714 Professional Development

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